



Part 1: News Analysis

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Construction broke ground this week in Kazakhstan slated to go online in 2010 to export Turkmenistan's gas to China via Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The ambitious 7,000 kilometer line, estimated at U.S. \$26 million, is becoming a fact on the ground compelling all countries involved to resolve their differences. Ultimately, China expects to receive 30 billion cubic meters a year from Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan also declared the tripartite project with Russia and Kazakhstan to build the Caspian pipeline as its top priority, announcing that preliminary exploration and design engineering had been conducted without waiting for finalization of the agreement. Kazakhstan also indicated its willingness to purchase Turkmen gas, and the Turkmen president ordered the acceleration of Turkmenistan's section of a regional rail through Kazakhstan to Iran.

Meanwhile, Turkmenistan continues to hold out the prospect of alternative routes and partners. President Berdymukhamedov traveled to Bucharest on July 15-16 to meet with President Traian Basescu to sign a bilateral agreement and establish an intergovernmental economic commission. Although the Romanian press said the leaders discussed the Nabucco pipeline, the Turkmen leader made no public comment on the matter. An intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghani trade commission convened this week in Ashgabat, and Turkmenistan agreed to explore and develop Afghanistan's oil and gas deposits in regions bordering on Turkmenistan, along with construction of a rail line and expanded power supply lines.

The continued harassment of journalists underscored the need for wariness even when Turkmenistan appears to be making human rights concessions under international pressure. Last week, Sazak Durdymuradov, contributing reporter for the Turkmen Service of the U.S.-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) was released from psychiatric detention after two weeks, but his colleagues were subsequently unable to reach him and his phone was cut off. Security police warned him that he should cease his "slander" of Turkmenistan in his broadcasts. Security police are on a campaign to track journalists throughout Turkmenistan, scrutinizing those who worked for now-closed ethnic newspapers or who had ties abroad. The Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR), reported that President Berdymukhamedov evidently ordered security agents to put a stop to negative coverage of Turkmenistan by attacking the source, via a crackdown on Internet reporters.

Despite such harassment, independent reporting continues to trickle out of Turkmenistan, belying the positive picture painted of the new leadership's reforms. NBCentral Asia has interviewed doctors who say Turkmenistan's drug problem is growing, and demonstrative actions like the government's public destruction of narcotics stockpiles seized are not curbing the number of addicts. Drug clinics are overcrowded and the official number of addicts registered -- 32,000 -- is believed to be much larger.

In another example of seeming human rights progress that disguises much more than meets the eye, the demolition of a prison in Turkmenbashi last month in fact merely displaced a problem of severe overcrowding to other facilities. As many as 1,920 convicts, many convicted of serious offenses, had been held in a facility intended for 700, the Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR) reports. New prisons need to be built to address chronic problems of sanitation and health.

The TIHR also reports that a typhoid epidemic is spreading in the eastern Turkmen province of Lebap due to contaminated drinking water. Water pipes that cracked during last winter's unseasonable frosts have still not

been repaired and are contributing to the spread of bacteria. Authorities have placed the region under quarantine and are preventing travel from the area. The official media remains silent about the problem.

At a government meeting this week, President Berdymukhamedov appeared to express great concern about the need to invest in the public infrastructure to meet social needs. Yet his remarks focused on showcase projects in the capital meant to impress foreigners, such as plans for a Turkmen Olympic Village for international sports competitions, the Ashgabat Cinema, and the Institute for Oil and Gas. He stressed the need to make the Ruhnama University, which keeps alive past dictator Saparmurat Niyazov's cultic book of sayings, the *Ruhnama*, a "major international research and educational center" to be outfitted with computers. The president called attention to the need to achieve international standards in construction, but did not address the pressing issues that affect most of Turkmenistan's citizens, such as health clinics, water mains and prisons, issues which are the focus of the independent coverage of Turkmenistan – whose reporters take tremendous risks raising awareness of them.

The president continues to practice reform not by delegating and empowering reformers, but through public humiliation of officials who are threatened with the prospect of abrupt dismissal. Educational officials were reprimanded publicly for apparently mismanaging school applications and the head of the national sports institute was fired for unspecified "shortcomings." The head of the state fisheries was also chided for failure to supply enough fish to the population at a government meeting where food security was discussed.

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1. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

a. President Berdymukhamedov Visits Romania

Original title: Romania, Turkmenistan Seeking 'Strong Bilateral Relations

Source: financiarul.ro/07/16/08 . Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: <http://www.financiarul.ro/2008/07/16/romania-turkmenistan-seeking-strong-development-of-bilateral-relations>

Synopsis: President Berdymukhamedov completed a two-day visit July 15-16 to Romania at the invitation of Romanian President Traian Basescu, financiarul.ro reported. Romania established relations with Turkmenistan in 1992 after independence and imports minerals and cotton from Turkmenistan and exports its machines and electrical equipment. The two countries signed an agreement on economic cooperation in the energy and transportation sectors and established an intergovernmental economic commission. They also

signed agreements on prevention of double taxation and tax evasion, educational exchanges and cooperation between the Romanian and Turkmen foreign ministries.

At a joint press conference, *financiarul.ro* reported, President Basescu said Romania had decided to develop strong bilateral relations with Turkmenistan at the political and economic level, in particular in the energy sector, and discussed the Nabucco pipeline during the summit. President Berdymukhamedov discussed Romania's support of Turkmenistan's approach in its relations with NATO, the EU and UN, but did not comment on Nabucco, saying that Romania could be involved in the development of the Caspian Sea draft agreement and noting that the two leaders had discussed construction of a rail line linking Turkmenistan and Europe to the Persian Gulf. The Turkmen president also expressed hope that Turkmen students would find places at Romanian academic institutions.

b. Turkmenistan to Launch Caspian Gas Pipeline in 2010

Original title: *Turkmenistan to Launch Russia Gas Pipeline in 2010.*

Source: Reuters/07/14/08. Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/oilRpt/idUKL1563346520080715>

Synopsis: Turkmenistan is planning to build a Moscow-backed Caspian Sea pipeline set to go online in 2010, Reuters reported, citing the state-controlled newspaper *Neitral'niy Turkmenistan*. The pipeline would follow the route of an existing line along the Caspian Sea coast. Russia is expected to import 10 billion cubic meters (bcm) of Turkmen gas and the same volume from Kazakhstan through this line, as part of its order of 50 bcm per year. Turkmenistan plans to boost future output and is considering alternative export routes, Reuters reported.

c. Ground Broken on Pipeline to China

Original title: *Gas Pipeline Gigantism.*

Source: *Asia Times*/atimes.com/07/17/08. Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/JG17Ag01.html

Synopsis: Last week in Kazakhstan, construction began on the world's longest pipeline which will export gas from Turkmenistan to China via Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, *Asia Times* reported. The nearly 7,000 kilometer line is estimated at US \$26 million, according to *Asia Times* analyst Robert M. Cutler. The ambitious project had prompted skepticism, but even before a tripartite agreement has been finalized, ground-breaking ceremonies took place in recent weeks in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the report said. Although the exact route of the line is not publicized, the section in Turkmenistan, approximately 200 km, will run along the bank of the Amu Darya River to the border of Uzbekistan, then on through to Kazakhstan and China.

The first phase of the project will originate in the already operating Bagtiarlyk fields and is set to provide up to 10 billion cubic meters (bcm) and Altyn Asyr, which will supply an additional three bcm. The second phase will add another 17 bcm from deposits to be jointly developed by Turkmenistan and China under a production-sharing agreement. China is to receive 30 bcm a year; additional flows of up to 10 bcm will be generated and partly consumed in Kazakhstan under a previous arrangement between the Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) and Kazakhstan. The Turkmenistan project is essentially an extension of the Chinese-Kazakhstani negotiations, Cutler noted.

In its 2007 agreement with Turkmenistan, China also linked its investment to a pledge from Ashgabat not to allow its territory to be used by third-parties to threaten Chinese interests, evidently a reference to the U.S., Cutler commented.

d. Turkmenistan to Assist in Afghanistan's Hydrocarbon Exploration, Energy Supply

Original title: *Intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghani Commission Meets in Ashgabat*

Source: Official government website/Turkmen State News Agency (TDH)/07/12/08. Excerpt by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: <http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/en/?idr=1&id=080712a>

Excerpt: The first meeting of the intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghani commission for trade and economic and technical co-operation was held in Ashgabat. The agenda included the priority issues of development of partnership in the framework of the bilateral top level agreements.

[Passage omitted: on the establishment of the commission at the Turkmen-Afghan summit in July 2007; on co-chairs G. Gurbanmyradov, Turkmen Minister of Economy and Development and Mohammad Jalil Sams, Afghan Minister of Economy.]

The participants focused on co-operation in the fuel and energy sector. In particular, the sides negotiated the Turkmen partners' collaboration in exploration and development of Afghanistan's oil and gas deposits in the regions bordering on Turkmenistan.

The talks focused on opportunities for further co-operation in the energy industry and in transport and communications, including railway and motor transport. Through joint efforts, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, could ensure north-south and east-west transit freight traffic across their territories as they occupy a favorable geographical position. In this regard the Turkmen partners expressed the willingness to connect the national railway networks of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. In particular, Turkmenistan intended to finance the construction of a branch line from the Turkmen town of Atamurat to the Turkmen-Afghan border that would give Afghanistan an outlet to other countries of the region. Turkmenistan intended to continue expanding the power network towards Afghanistan by laying power supply lines in its territory. In particular, Turkmenistan intends to increase the power supply to Herat. Moreover, proposals have been prepared on construction of substations and 410 kilometers of 500 kVt power lines from Turkmenistan to the Afghan border.

[Passage omitted: on educational exchanges and provision of free medical care to populations living in border regions; closing expressions of gratitude.]

e. Baku to Host Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan Oil and Gas Conference September 9-11

Original title: Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan Oil and Gas Conference to be Held in Baku on September 9-11

Source: abc.az/07/15/08. Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: http://abc.az/eng/news_15_07_2008_25922.html

Synopsis: Azerbaijan will host a joint Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan Oil and Gas Conference in Baku on September 9-11, abc.az, the Azerbaijan-based Fineko Informational & Analytic Agency website reported. Natiq Aliyev, Azerbaijan's Minister of Industry and Energy extended an invitation to Ambassador. Steven Mann, U.S. State Department senior advisor for Eurasian affairs, at a meeting this week. According to abc.az, Azerbaijan established a high-level committee of officials from ministries of oil and gas, environment and natural resources, finance, economic development, transport, and foreign affairs to organize the conference, which seeks to increase bilateral cooperation between the two countries and stimulate profitable regional projects.

f. OSCE Seminar in Ashgabat on Judicial Independence

Original title: OSCE Centre Organizes Seminars on Rights of Accused in Turkmenistan

Source: OSCE Press Centre/07/11/08

Full version: <http://www.osce.org/item/32169.html>

International human rights standards related to the treatment of the accused from arrest to trial were the focus of a series of seminars held across Turkmenistan, the last of which ended July 11 in Turkmenbashi. Organized by the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat in co-operation with Turkmenistan's Foreign Ministry and National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, the two-day events held in four regional cities brought together more than 80 representatives from prosecutor's offices, judges and defense lawyers.

"In light of the current discussion on the reform of Turkmenistan's Constitution, the seminars have provided a timely occasion for reinforcing the fundamental obligation of judges to exercise their functions independently and impartially in accordance with international human rights standards and commitments," said Paul Garlick, a judge from the United Kingdom who led some of the sessions.

The seminars addressed the principles of human rights concepts covered by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, giving particular focus to its provisions relating to criminal justice processes. Two international experts - Paul Garlick and a former Georgian prosecutor who works for the Council of Europe - held sessions on freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, the right to fair trial and the concept of equality of arms. The seminars also included a moot court case in which participants applied the standards under discussion.

Since 2001, the OSCE Centre has organized six courses on international human rights legislation for civil servants and government representatives. The Centre plans to hold seminars on legislative processes for law-makers and follow-up events for the judiciary in the autumn.

2. DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

a. RFE/RL Unable to Contact Contributor After Release from Detention

Original title: Turkmenistan: RFE/RL Unable to Reach Reporter

Source: Committee to Protect Journalists/cpj.org/07/11/08

Full version: <http://www.cpi.org/news/2008/europe/turkmen11jul08na.html>

A contributing reporter for the Turkmen Service of the U.S.-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) who was forcibly held for two weeks in two different psychiatric facilities has now had his phone disabled, according to RFE/RL. Bowing to international pressure, authorities freed Sazak Durdymuradov on July 3. A security officer warned him to “go and tell the truth” about his treatment in detention, and not to “slander” in his broadcasts, he said. Reports of Durdymuradov’s unlawful detention and alleged torture had outraged the international community, which called for his immediate release. CPJ attempted to interview Durdymuradov today, but was unable to get through to him.

Durdymuradov was due to participate July 11 in an RFE/RL broadcast on human rights in Turkmenistan along with three other local contributors. But shortly after the Prague-based Turkmen service made contact with them, all the participants’ telephone lines were simultaneously disabled. “We had to record our program with a different panel of participants,” RFE/RL Turkmen Service Director Oguljamal Yazliyeva told CPJ. CPJ also repeatedly tried to reach Durdymuradov today to confirm the details of his detention and release, but was unable to reach him on either his landline or cell phone.

“We are concerned that we and others are unable to contact our colleague Sazak Durdymuradov and by reports that his phone has been disabled,” said CPJ Europe and Central Asia Program Coordinator Nina Ognianova. “We ask that authorities ensure that Durdymuradov is able to communicate with the outside world.”

Durdymuradov, 59, returned to his home in the Western city of Bakharden on July 4, RFE/RL reported. On July 7, in his first interview since being released, Durdymuradov told the broadcaster that Turkmen security officials said they set him free on the condition that he does not commit what they call slander. Of his detention at the Bezmein psychiatric clinic near the capital, Ashgabat, Durdymuradov said he was “thrown in there,” along with at least 30 mental patients, and left without supervision. “I did not sleep. If I’d fallen asleep, anything could have happened to me,” Durdymuradov told RFE/RL.

The day of his arrest, on June 20, school officials fired Durdymuradov from his full-time job as a high school history teacher. Yazliyeva told CPJ. As part of their efforts to stifle independent reporting, Turkmen authorities often put pressure on journalists and their family members, often by depriving them of their sources of income, CPJ research shows. Durdymuradov’s family of five now has to survive on the meager monthly salary of his younger daughter—330,000 Turkmen manat (about US\$65), RFE/RL reported. In his July 7 interview, Durdymuradov told RFE/RL he would continue his work despite his ordeal. He confirmed that the Turkmen security service coerced him to sign a statement of commitment to stop his collaboration with the radio when he was detained, but he refused. Upon his release, he said, a security officer told him: “You can collaborate [with RFE/RL] without problems. But don’t slander. Don’t give false information to people. There won’t be problems if you give correct information.”

b. Turkmen Security Police Tracking Journalists

Original title: Journalists Under Surveillance

Source: Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR)/07/16/08. Excerpt by OSI Turkmenistan Project. Reprinted with permission from TIHR.

Full version: <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?0257044245000000000000011000000>

Excerpt: Journalists continue to be persecuted in Turkmenistan. The Ministry of National Security is reportedly compiling a database of journalists not employed by the state mass media including those who left the country.

About 20 years ago, all local papers were liquidated throughout Turkmenistan due to economic difficulties and in 1998, all velayat and municipal newspapers published in the languages of ethnic minorities were also shut down. Most journalists and print media staff were forced to leave Turkmenistan; a few remained, however. For some reason the former journalists who stayed in Turkmenistan and their colleagues who left the country are raising enormous interest among the Turkmen special services. In June, the special service officers made a raid of all editorial offices in an attempt to access archives containing files on the former employees.

In addition to the files, special service officers tried to solicit information from print media managers and, if a manager was a recent appointee without a long institutional memory of the media outlet, special service officers approached the outlet's long-serving staff members. The officers from the National Security departments asked not only to provide the first and last names of the former journalists and correspondents, but also their current places of residence (the countries and cities to which they moved), their current occupations and the names of those with whom they stay in contact in Turkmenistan.

One officer admitted that President Berdymukhamedov is outraged by the negative coverage of the situation in Turkmenistan posted on the Internet. He ordered that journalists working for foreign Internet publications be located at all costs and retaliatory measures taken against them.

[Passage omitted: journalists have been under surveillance by the security police since the Soviet era, but files may have been lost due to high staff turnover at the Ministry of National Security, and need to be updated.]

c. Turkmenistan Should Admit Scale of Growing Drug Problem: Analysts

Original title: *Turkmenistan's Drug Problem*

Source: NBCentralAsia/Institute for War and Peace Reporting/07/11/08. Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Full version: http://www.iwpr.net/?p=btm&s=b&o=345687&apc_state=henb

Synopsis: Turkmenistan is failing to curb its growing drug problem, NBCentral Asia analysts report. While the government is cracking down with severe punishments for use and sale of *nasavay*, a local form of chewing tobacco classified as a mild narcotic, they have failed to make inroads against the much larger threat of heroin trafficking, mainly from Afghanistan. The Turkmen government convened a regional meeting to discuss the war on drugs in Ashgabat on June 26, and demonstratively destroyed more than a ton of illicit narcotics, but local analysts say they have not reduced the number of addicts, NBCentral Asia reports.

A Turkmen health ministry source reported to NBCentral Asia that 32,500 people were officially listed as addicts at drug clinic; however, other researchers estimate the number is much higher because of fear of reporting. According to some doctors that spoke to NBCentral Asia, they believe that drug abuse affects a large and growing portion of the population; one is quoted as saying that residential drug clinics are overcrowded, and that there have even been incidents in which addicts have staged mass breakouts, because of the substandard conditions of the clinics.

NBCentral Asia cites experts who warn of dire consequences of the failure to establish more drug treatment centers, introduce new treatment methods, and conduct public awareness campaigns. First and foremost, they say that the government must acknowledge the problem, report truthfully and seek international assistance.

d. Prison Demolition Masks Greater Overcrowding Problem in Turkmen Prisons

Original title: *Demolition of A Prison: Problem Solved or Created?*

Source: *Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR)*/06/30/08. Reprinted with permission from TIHR.

Electronic version: <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?025704422100000000000011000000>

On June 25, in the presence of foreign diplomats, a prison building was demolished in the city of Turkmenbashi. The timing of the move by the authorities coincided with the international day against drug abuse and drug trafficking, and, furthermore, was linked to a claim that the crime rate has considerably decreased in the country and the prison facility is no longer needed. It should be noted that the facility demolished was a prison (BLT-5), as reported by the Turkmen mass media. Among the inmates were the criminals who committed grave offense and repeat offenders sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

BLT-5 was initially designed for 700 inmates. Three weeks prior the demolition, some 1920 convicts were being held in the prison, i.e. about three times its capacity. The country's remaining penitentiary institutions are also overcrowded. We have already reported that the number of female prisoners on the amnesty list significantly outnumbered the capacity of Turkmenistan's only women's penal colony DZK-8.

Consequently, the displacement of the former inmates of the Turkmenbashi prison will lead to worsening overcrowding of other detention facilities. Furthermore, serious offenders make up the majority of BLT's convicts. This implies that apart from severe prison overcrowding, the managers (and inmates) of the penitentiary institutions to which the former Turkmenbashi inmates will be relocated will face a range of other problems.

It is premature to speak about the decreasing crime rate in Turkmenistan. Despite the frequent amnesties,, prisons and colonies still face overcrowding. If the old prisons are demolished, new detention facilities for inmates should be constructed to meet the relevant health and sanitary standards and take into account prisoner's rights. In the meantime, prison demolition designed as a demonstrative move is expected to create additional problems rather than provide solutions. Yet, the Turkmen press will not be covering this.

e. Typhoid Epidemic Spreading in Turkmenistan: Rights Group

Original title: Typhoid Fever is Rampant in Eastern Turkmenistan

Source: Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR)/07/14/08. Excerpt by OSI Turkmenistan Project. Reprinted with permission from TIHR.

Full version: <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?0257044233000000000000011000000>

Excerpt: Turkmen authorities placed the northern part of the Lebap velayat under quarantine after typhoid fever was found to be spreading from several villages. May and June 2008 were marked by large outbreaks of typhoid fever among residents of this eastern Turkmenistan province. The main cause of the disease is contaminated drinking water supplied to the water distribution system. Authorities are covering up information about the epidemic and it is difficult to find out who many people have become ill.

Meanwhile, the number of infected adults and children is increasing and the disease is spreading to new areas from the northern etraps of the Lebap velayat to other districts in the province. Several dozen cases have already been reported in Turkmenabat, the administrative center of the province. In May, a student from a Turkmenabat school went home for the holidays in the Darganat etrap, located in northern Lebap. She returned with a high fever and a severe gastrointestinal disorder, was taken to the infectious diseases hospital by ambulance, and diagnosed with typhoid fever.

Local experts say water pipes cracked during winter frosts, resulting in the contamination of drinking water with typhoid bacteria. Many towns have still been unable to repair supply and sewerage systems that broke down this past winter.

[Passages omitted: description of typhoid symptoms and preventative measures taken by Lebap velayat's health department. including a ban on travel from the region; on the continuing threat to public health from unsafe drinking water.]

f. President Orders Improved Construction Standards

Original title: International Quality Standards – to Construction Projects in Turkmenistan: President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov Chairs a Meeting Focused on Social Infrastructure Development

Source: Official government website/Turkmen State News Agency (TDH)/07/09/08. Excerpt by OSI Turkmenistan Project.

Full version: http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/_en/?idr=1&id=080709b

Excerpt: President Berdymukhamedov chaired a meeting focused on further development of the social infrastructure including apartment houses, urban environment and sports complexes.

[Passages omitted: on ministry officials present; on the president's insistence on improving quality to international standards; on the need to increase cement production and environmentally-friendly construction materials; on the need for more multi-storey car parks and green zones; on Turkmenistan's preparation for the Olympics.]

A draft project for an Olympic Village to be constructed in Ashgabat was presented to the Turkmen leader for consideration. The complex, set to become the largest in Central Asia, would include sport facilities such as stadiums, open-air and covered sports grounds and gymnasiums, swimming pools, cycle tracks, tennis courts, a medical and rehabilitation center, and hotels, etc. The sports complex would be able to host international competitions as well. Addressing Polimeks CEO Erol Tabanja, President Berdymukhamedov said that the construction project should combine the best traditions of Turkmen architecture and advanced architectural and engineering thinking. The Turkmen leader emphasized that the main requirement expected from foreign contractors and partners in Turkmenistan was the high quality of construction works. Draft projects of buildings for the Ashgabat Cinema and the Institute of Oil and Gas to be constructed in Ashgabat were also presented to the President for consideration.

[Passages omitted: on the need for road infrastructure; on criticism of the work of A. Dyrdyev, chairman of Turkmennebitgazgurlushyk (state construction company); on the importance of construction to larger social and cultural issues].

The President said that the Ruhnama University, which should be a major international research and educational center, would include a large computer center.

[Passage omitted: on the autographing of photographs with the president and plans for a national holiday to honor cultural works.]

g. Turkmen Education Officials Reprimanded; Sports Official Fired

Original title: Chronicle

Source: Neitral'nyi Turkmenistan/No. 174/Turkmen State News Agency (TDH)/07/14/08. Translation by OSI Turkmenistan Project

By order of the President of Turkmenistan, Ayna Gurbanniyazova, record of the Dovletmammet Azadi Turkmen National Institute of World Languages was issued a stern reprimand for shortcomings in organizing educational work. She was warned that in the event that she failed to improve within the immediate future, she would be relieved of her post.

By decree of the President of Turkmenistan dated July 12, Bayramberdi Annaorazov was dismissed from his position as rector of the Turkmenistan National Institute of Sport and Tourism for serious shortcomings in his work.

By order of the President of Turkmenistan, Mukhammetgeldi Annaamanov, Ministry of Education of Turkmenistan, was issued a stern reprimand for failing to organize properly the work of selection of young people for higher and middle special educational institutions in Turkmenistan in 2008 and for lax oversight of the work of the relevant state commission.

h. Fisheries Official Reprimanded for Poor Supply of Fish in Turkmenistan

Original title: Turkmen Fishery Committee Fails to Supply Sufficient Amount of Fish Products to Population

Source: turkmenistan.ru/07/10/08. Synopsis by OSI Turkmenistan Project.

Full version: http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=13212&type=event&sort=date_desc

Synopsis: At a government meeting on July 10, at which Turkmenistan's food supply was discussed,, President Berdymukhamedov severely reprimanded Toyly Komekov, chairman of the state fishery committee, for poor performance, turkmenistan.ru reported citing the presidential news service. Komekov was criticized for poor management and oversight and failure to provide the population with enough fish; the Turkmen leader urged for the acceleration of the construction of a fish-breeding facility in Kiyanly and ordered officials to make proposals for increasing the fish supply.

3. ECONOMIC NEWS

a. Kazakhstan to Purchase Turkmen Gas

Source: BBC Monitoring--Central Asia/TV Altyn Asyr/07/12/08. Expert by OSI Turkmenistan Project

Excerpt: Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are discussing a Kazakh proposal to buy Turkmen gas, the Turkmen deputy prime minister, Tachberdi Tagyyev, told a government meeting on 12 July, as reported by Turkmen TV the same day. The government meeting was chaired by Turkmen President Berdymukhamedov.

"A proposal on Kazakhstan's readiness to purchase this raw fuel [gas] from Turkmenistan was first made by the Kazakh president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, during a meeting with Turkmenistan's president, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, in Astana," the TV report said.

At the government meeting, President Berdymukhamedov ordered the stepping up of the construction of the Turkmen sector of a 600-km North-South railway project in western Turkmenistan which will link the Turkmen and Kazakh railway networks and extend to the Gulf via Iran.

[Passage omitted: on the president's planned trip to Romania and vacation schedule].

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations have been prepared by OSI's Turkmenistan Project.

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